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PARLIAMENT.

EAST INDIA LOAN.

[illegible] on December 8, Mr. Balfour [illegible] to the House if the Government [illegible] as to public business, [illegible] East India Loan Bill. He [illegible] Government promised to adjourn the [illegible] stage of the Parish Councils [illegible] purpose of making a statement and [illegible] ity of a reply.—The Chancellor of the [illegible] plied that was not exactly the state[illegible] rstood that a statement would be made, and that any discussion which might arise would be taken another day. It was proposed to report progress on the Parish Councils Bill at 11 o'clock to-night for the purpose.

On the motion for the resolution authorising the raising of a loan not exceeding £10,000,000, for the service of the Government of India, Mr. G. Russell denied that the Government were now attempting to do anything unusual or abnormal. As far as he could see, what the Government were now trying to do was what had been constantly done since 1858, when the Queen took over the Government of India. On eleven different occasions the Government had come to Parliament to borrow sums ranging between £3,000,000 and £10,000,000, not counting certain specific loans for special purposes. The right hon. gentleman opposite (Mr. Goschen) reproached him with having tried to steal a march upon the House by abstaining from making a statement on the motion for the Committee, but he found there were three precedents for making the statement on the resolution and four for making it, as he proposed, on the second reading. All the eleven Acts to which he had referred were for general borrowing powers. In no one case was there anything in the terms of the Act to limit the application of the money borrowed. In the great majority of cases the borrowing power had been exhausted, but there still remained certain unexhausted powers, the joint result being that in June of this year borrowing power remained to the amount of about £7, 500,000. The closing of the mints was attended with an inevitable disturbance of trade, and a very marked effect was produced by the closing of the mints upon the sale of our Indian bills, for whereas the average sale of bills for the last five years had been something over eight millions tens of rupees—last year it was as much as 9½ millions—this year it had been only 1,400,000 tens of rupees, a difference which implied a loss in gold of £5,400,000 sterling. This failure to sell had obliged the Government to have recourse to some of the unexhausted borrowing powers had been reduced to £1,852,000, at least until next April, but by that time they would have to make payments amounting to £8,000,000, and as their borrowing powers were insufficient for them to meet those payments they had been compelled to come to Parliament for an extension of those powers. It was true there was a surplus under the head of cash balances in India, and it might be said that they might bring home a sufficiency of rupees to discharge their liabilities. But considering the present low price of the [illegible]ee, to take that course would cost ten times more than [illegible]ould to effect a temporary loan spread over twelve mo[illegible]. Perhaps the action of the Government in this m[illegible]ight in some respects be subjected to criticism, but he did [illegible] think there would be much room for fault-finding. A margin had been taken beyond the sums actually falling due in respect of possible unforeseen emergencies. If they had failures during the winter months they would not need to borrow anything, but he was afraid that that was a contingency that was past praying for. If, on the other hand, the sales were more than they might require to borrow £5,000,000 or, in certain events, £6,000,000. They, therefore, had taken a margin of equipment against a possible loss of receipts which they had no reason to anticipate. It had been thought better to ask Parliament at once for borrowing powers not only sufficient for a certain time, but to give them a reserve power in their hands, which they hoped they might not have occasion to have recourse [illegible]. The bill to be introduced would be drawn nearly on the lines of former bills, with the exception of certain details which he would explain upon the second reading of the measure.

Sir J. Gorst could not admit that the hon. gentleman had given any adequate explanation of the reasons which had induced the Government to make their proposal. The course the Government were taking was both unusual and abnormal, and it was the duty of Parliament before agreeing to that proposal to insist upon having a full and detailed statement with regard to the policy which the Government were pursuing, and as to their intentions as to the future. During the time he had had the honour of being connected with the Government of India their policy in this respect was exactly the reverse of that now being pursued. The principle always pursued in those days was that the Government of India sold the exchange at stated regular intervals, as money was wanted, quite irrespective of the momentary price of the rupee. It was thought that it was no part of the duty of the Government of India to become speculators in the value of silver. Their business was to pay the money necessary for the payments in London at the time they were required. Whether the rupee was going up or down that policy was always steadily pursued. The hon. gentleman said the stoppage of the coinage of silver had been attended with momentous consequences; that it had caused disturbance and dislocation in the money market, and in the exchange between London and Calcutta. In consequence of that the Government had almost ceased to sell bills in India. Without saying at present that this wrong, it was a new departure in Indian finance of so momentous a character that it ought to be fully discussed by the House, which was responsible for Indian finance; and the proposal of the Government ought not to be assented to until it had been most fully considered. According to the hon. gentleman's own statement, the position was a critical one. The Indian Gove[illegible] would require eight millions of gold by April [illegible]nd they proposed under the bill which was to be [illegible]rishm[illegible]ceed to take powers to raise that eight million[illegible]ly by borrowing. So that while the Indian Tre[illegible]rin[illegible]as being glutted with silver, the Government [illegible]be borrowing gold in London without any certain[illegible]that they would afterwards be able to redress the b[illegible]nce by the sale of their bills. Of coarse, if the value of silver rose, and the exchange was good, the transaction would be a very advantageous one for the Indian Government. But what prospect was there of that taking place? Supposing silver fell still further; then the transaction would be most disastrous for the Indian Government. There was no doubt that this was a speculation. For the first time in the financial history of India the Government were going to speculate upon a rise in the value of silver. He would not say at present that such a transaction was not justified. All he wished to urge was that such a transaction should not be pursued without great deliberation, and without having the sanction of the Imperial Government as well as of the Government of India. He had noticed a certain reluctance on the part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give the time necessary for the discussion of the question; but after the statement of the Under-Secretary for India the Government and Parliament would admit that such a very important and new departure in the [illegible]od of managing Indian finance ample opportunity for discussion ought to be given.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer pointed out that the [illegible] were not [illegible]th arguing the original policy of the stoppage of the mints. The question raised was how to deal with the consequences of that stoppage. There was a certain sum of money which India paid in England for home charges of various kinds. In former days there were occasions when India was not able to pay that money, and consequently had to borrow; as, for instance, in the case of a famine of a war. Parliament then gave authority for money to be borrowed to meet the deficiency. As the right hon. gentleman truly observed, that was not the case now. India had the money. At this moment there were six millions of money available for the payment of the obligations; and the question was, what were the best means of paying those obligations? The money was there in India, and in the present state of exchange it was not profitable to transmit the money direct from India. The right hon. gentleman said truly that in former days they sold bills at whatever price they could get. No doubt that was the practice, but would it have been a wise thing during the last few months to have sold those bills for any price they could get for them. The effect of it would have been to run down the exchange to a much lower rate than it was now. The one thing that the people in Lancashire had been asking for was a steady exchange. The exchange had been steadied by the Indian Government in consequence of their, not consenting to sell below a certain price, and the result had been that Lancashire had been able to sell its goods at a fair price. That advantage had been derived by the course pursued. He could not agree with the right hon. gentleman that a favourable exchange depended on the price of silver. What the Indian Government suffered from was this, that at a particular time of the year, when this measure was adopted, the exports from India were at the very lowest point, and the question of whether they would get one a favourable terms for their bills depended on whether, during the few ensuing months, those exports would grow and so create a demand for more bills. What had been happening was that there had been an unusual diminution of the balances of exports as compared with imports in India, and this had affected the price of bills. Another thing which had prevented the fall of the rupee was the closing of the mints and thereby raising the price by the simple process of diminishing the supply of minted silver. The Indian Government believed that they had a temporary difficulty in dealing with their bills. Their expectation was that in the early months of next year there would be large exports, and that then the demand would rise again, and that they would not be called upon to use those borrowing powers to any great extent. The Indian Government thought that they were doing wisely, in the early stages of this experiment, to adopt a cheap method of paying the money which they possessed in India by borrowing temporarily in England, believing, as they did, that upon the course of exchange in future they would have a more favourable and successful means of transmitting the money they had to England.

Mr. Goschen, in dwelling on the enormous gravity of the situation, expressed his gratification at the fact that the Government had recognised to the full the very serious character of the situation and of the demand they made upon the House in respect to the present bill. In reference to the remark that the Government had stolen a march on the Opposition, he might state that in using that phrase he had no intention of casting any particular blame on Ministers. The position seemed to be that there were two matters which must come before the House in connection with the bill—one was the policy of the measures adopted by the Indian Government and endorsed by the British Government, and the other the financial consequences which would arise at the present moment. He was entirely in accord with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Under-Secretary that on this occasion it would be out of place to discuss the general policy of the Government, but they must discuss that policy for many reasons, in order to form a judgment and to ascertain whether the course which had been taken was one that indicated any probability of success. There was a great danger in this experiment. Supposing Parliament had not been sitting for the autumn session, what would have been the position of the Indian Government, which, according to the right hon. gentleman, were only supplied with the means of borrowing up to January 5 next?

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said the Government would have come to Parliament before September.

Mr. Goschen said in that cause the Government were not treating them fairly in the budget statement, in which there was not the slightest indication of the present situation. They had arrived at this situation through the difficulty in selling their bills. The extent of the difficulty was not foreseen by the home Government, and he doubted whether it was foreseen by the Indian Government. If they had got eight millions less during the present year they would have to add that amount to the seventeen million which they had to sell every year, and to that they would also have to add some further amounts for the sales they might not be able to make during the coming months. By what they had done they would probably find that they had set the exchange too high, and that they would not be able to make the exchange of rupees at 1s. 3¼d. or 1s. 4d. The Under-Secretary had spoken of a loss of five millions. If it was a loss at all it was only a loss on paper—it was the difference between the arbitrary rate at which the Government [illegible]had to sell and the price at which they might be obliged to sell. According to the hon. gentleman there would [illegible] loss of five millions. A loss compared with what? With the [illegible] the Government might say that they attempted to fix the price at 1s. 3d., and that if they sold below that price they would incur a loss. Well, they had got seventeen millions to sell, and their expectation was that they would be able to sell not only that, which was the ordinary amount, at that fixed price, but also the hole of the millions which they had not been able to sell this year. The right hon. gentleman said that the imports had been stimulated by the change in the rate of exchange. Was it certain that the exports would not be discouraged by the operation? It was certainly a question how far the Government were right in their prognostications. They must wait for the result of this experiment to see whether the imports from this country to India would be increased or whether the exports from India to this country would be checked. Neither in India nor in this country were the people prepared for the result of an experiment which was based on no scientific principle. It appeared to him that the Government had embarked in a gigantic speculation—a speculation in rupees. His right hon. friend said it was "a corner" in rupees. The Government had got a certain number of rupees which ordinarily they would sell for gold. They kept their rupees expecting to get a higher price. That might be the right course to follow, but it was a highly experimental course, for which there was absolutely no precedent. It had been said that it had been tried in France; but France had not to pay seventeen millions in gold every year come what might. He wished to impress upon the House that this was not a bill of an ordinary character, like previous bills for loans for railways or other specific objects. This was the first time that it was proposed to make a large loan for the purpose of maintaining the exchange, and it was the duty of the House to examine it from all sides. He felt they would not be doing their duty to India, to the exporters of Manchester, to the money market, or to the other interests involved, unless they had invited the attention of the country to the great operations in which the Government were engaged. He asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he would be able to fix the second reading.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer: I will try to fix it for an early day.

Mr. Goschen further hoped the right hon. gentleman would not bring it on at the fag end of a sitting, but would fix it as the first order of the day.

Sir R. Temple was fully prepared to support the action of Her Majesty's Government. Under very difficult circumstances they had done the best that was possible, and there was, in his opinion, ample justification for their action. The arguments of the Chancellor of the Exchequer were well founded, and he had evidently been well advised from an Anglo-Indian point of view. There was no doubt that the Government had made a great experiment, but it had been carried out with the utmost prudence and circumspection, and it was important it should have the fairest possible play. There was no doubt that the balance of trade was not in favour of India just now, and that was the real cause of the sale of Council bills being suspended. He submitted the Government of India and the [illegible] Government were justified and even bound at the present crisis not to embarrass the financial relations of the two countries by allowing the Council bills to be sold at very disadvantageous rates.

The resolution was then agreed to; and the bill was brought up and read a first time.

On Monday, December 11, Mr. Goschen asked, will the Chancellor of the Exchequer state to the House his intentions with regard to the East India Loan Bill, and fix a day?—The Chancellor of the Exchequer: It will be the first order of the day on Wednesday.

INDIA BALANCES.

On Wednesday, December 13, Mr. G. W. Russel, in reply to Sir J. Lubbock, said at the end of November, this year, the cash balances in the Indian Treasury amounted to 15,240,000 tens of rupees as against 9,100,000 tens of rupees at the same time last year.

EAST INDIA LOAN BILL: SECOND READING.

Mr. G. W. Russell, in moving the second reading of this bill, repeated his statement made on the report of the circumstances which rendered it necessary to borrow £10,000,000. Much depended on the sales of bills, and possibly if these sold tolerably well only £ 1,000,000, or even less, might be wanted, or it might be they would want £ 6,000,000, but the rest of the borrowing powers asked for were required for a margin, and in asking for that magin over and above actual necessities, the Government were strictly following the precedents of former times. Their predecessors had never had the same kind and amount of difficulties to contend with as had the present Government, but they had found difficulties not very unlike the present, and they had applied precisely the same remedy as that now proposed. In 1860 and 1861 the late Lord Halifax took action, which closely resembled that now being taken, and in 1874 there was a precedent, which was a very close one. He trusted that the question would not be treated in a party spirit, and that right hon. and hon. gentlemen would give the Government credit for having done the best they could, under difficult circumstances, to meet a deficiency which they did not clearly foresee, and which they had no power to avert.

Sir R. Temple supported the bill. Most of the money was required for legitimate public works of a remunerative character, such as light railways and canals, and, although there was undoubtedly a margin, the money was wanted to place the Secretary of State's Treasury in funds, in consequence of Council bills being unsaleable. No doubt it was a serious precedent and he did not seek to minimise the gravity of the case; but he thought an explanation could be found for the course taken, which was perfectly satisfactory. He deprecated minute examinations into questions of currency, as many of the causes of the present state of things were far removed from the value of silver. The real reason was to be found in broad general causes which affected values, and which depended upon harvest and hundreds of other things, quite apart from the question of currency. The balance of trade had been reversed for a time, and there was no money to be remitted to India from her exports. Therefore, there was no demand for her Council bills. The Government were bound to take such a step as they were asking the House permission to take. It would be asked were these requests to be made annually? If so, the prospect was indeed grave that the Government of India should be borrowing for current expenses. That question he admitted, should be looked fairly and squarely in the face. He was perfectly prepared to do so. Supposing the Government tided over this crisis with present loan, the relief would be at once felt, the natives would again begin to export, and the mercants would make more suitable tenders—by that he meant tenders at exceptional rates; but even if the Government of India could not rely on mercantile operations, they must none the less remit to this country, because they owed the money. That was perfectly praticable, because the Government of India had all the money they wanted either in the Treasury or in the taxes. In the Indian market gold could be bought and sent to this country in bars or coined. He had himself, in 1872, when he thought the merchants were not behaving quite fairly, remitted to this country. It had cost him some trouble, but he found that the results were about as good as he would have obtained otherwise. Apart from questions of detail, he contended that this measure of the Government was sound, judicious, and necessary in order to preserve the Government of India from embarrassment, while fair trial was being given to an experiment.

Mr. Montagu said the Government of India were forced into the present action, and had a right to take it, and to persevere in it, but he thought at the same time that they would have to put an import duty on silver in India. If that action was not taken this year, he believed it would have to be taken next year. (Hear, hear.)

Sir John Gorst said that when the Under-Secretary stated that Council bills were unsaleable, of course, he meant that they were unsaleable at the price the Government wanted for them—(hear, hear)—and that the Government did not choose to sell the bills at the price they could have been sold for in the market, although that price was by no means the lowest which the rupee had touched. The action of the Government was taken in pursuance of quite a new policy, and in spite of the explanations given by the Under-Secretary, he must point out that it had never been pursued before. The policy might be right or wrong, but it was a policy which ought to be considered on its merits.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer pointed out that in 1876 Lord George Hamilton said it was not advisable to force the Government bills on the silver market.

Sir J. Gorst said he was afraid he could not undertake to discuss the finances of India in 1876. He would withdraw the expression he used, and would say that the policy had not been pursued in recent times, and that the precedent relied upon was and old one. The policy of the Government of India had been in the past to sell their bills regularly and systematically month by month, whatever might be the state of the exchange, and not to speculate for a rise or to make provision for a fall. In fact, they had hitherto abstained from all speculation whatever. He did not venture to say whether the policy of the Government was right or wrong, or to assert that they were not pursuing the only possible course open to them, but the gravity of the situation was obvious, because they were staking everything on the expectation of an improved state of things next year, and if that improvement did not come to pass they would be in a more evil case than they were now. However, he was sure that the [illegible] would support [illegible] House in undertaking measures to meet the necessity which had arisen in a manner which would cause the least possible disadvantage and oppression to the community. (Hear, hear.)

Sir J. Lubbock did not wish to oppose the bill, but expressed apprehension in regard to the effect of the policy which the Government were pursuing. He joined with the hon. member for the Tower Hamlets in thinking there should be an import duty on silver in India; not that he advocated the proposition in itself, but because in the circumstances it would produce the maximum of good with the minimum of evil. Such a duty would raise the value of silver in India along with the increased value of the rupee, and would, he believed, avoid what would otherwise be a source of danger. He hoped that Her Majesty's Government would accept the suggestion made by his hon. friend (Mr. Montagu.) He did not oppose the second reading of the bill, because he understood Her Majesty's Government had to some extent acted upon it. He was not one of those who thought it was desirable in these matters to make any great or extreme change. The Government had ceased for some time to draw bills, but he understood that they were gradually recommencing to draw them. This might perhaps indicate some reversal of their policy, but he could not help feeling that speculation, whether in silver or in rupees, was an operation which it was very undesirable for any Government to engage in. (Hear, hear.)

Sir G. Chesney said he had been among the first to advocate the closing of the Indian mints and the fixing of a limit below which Council bills should not be sold. The result of that action was that stability of exchange had been established. This bill was necessary to tide over a period of difficulty. He agreed that it was a serious measure, as he would agree that it was a serious thing to cut off a man's leg, but it was better to do that than to allow the whole body to mortify. (Hear, hear.) He thought there was sufficient justification for the action of the Secretary of State, as unless some measure of this kind had been undertaken the burden which would have been placed on the Indian taxpayer would have been insupportable, and the English Government would not have been saved financial difficulty. He thought if the Secretary of State continued to refuse to sell his bills below a fixed price it would lead to greater stability, and that in the end the policy would be successful.

Sir W. Wedderburn said he wished to say a few words on behalf of the unfortunate and unrepresented Indian taxpayer, and he appealed to the Government if they were going to make this great leap to make it as little as possible in the dark. He trusted that they would grant impartial inquiry into the financial condition of India before embarking upon another loan in gold, because by increasing the liability in gold the Government were enlarging the millstone of debt which now hung about the neck of the Indian taxpayer. The loan must become a permanent liability.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said the most important consideration for the Government of India was whether or not some step could be put to the increasing expenditure of that country, but that was not the question they had to consider to-day. What the Indian Government were asking for was a present remedy for an imminent danger, and they were compelled to ask for it in order that they might fulfil public obligations. He was glad to see that every member who had spoken had avoided the entrancing subject of bimetallism, and he hoped that example would be followed in view of the report of the Royal Commission of 1888 upon that subject, and the present position in which the question stood. They were bound to assume that when the Government of India made a proposal of this kind they made it for the benefit of all the classes under their sway, and when the Government received the suggestion they selected the most competent men to examine into the matter, and they said they would not be justified in refusing to accede to it. The Government accepted full responsibility for the step they had taken, and although they did not deny this was an experiment of a serious character it must be borne in mind that the situation which it was brought forward to meet was a very serious one. It was not accurate to say that the object of the Indian Government was to raise the price of the rupee, as their object was to prevent the fall of the rupee, and thus to steady the exchange. If they had done what had been suggested, and had followed the market merely in regard to the price of their bills, thus allowing the rupee to be run down, they would have done the very thing which it was the whole object of their policy to prevent—that was the fall of the rupee—and they would have sustained great loss. He denied that there was anything speculative in the action of the Indian Government, who had the expectation that there would be a large increase of exports shortly, and, therefore, an increased demand for bills. The manufacturers in Lancashire, moreover, were doing exactly the same thing as the Indian Government. In expectation of gaining advantage by delay they inclined to sell their bills, and thought it was better to borrow for the present. In view of what took place in 1876 this was no new policy, and, in fact, it was the established practice of the Indian Government in view of a heavy fall in silver and a difficulty in selling bills. In November the importation of silver into India was not one-half of what it was in 1891 and 1892, so that there was no occasion for alarm, as the import was greatly diminishing. The Government of India believed there was a temporary disturbance which could be dealt with by a temporary measure. The bill did not saddle India with permanent loan, and it was believed that the Treasury Bills would be taken, and the loan not needed. It seemed to him that was a reasonable and sensible anticipation. He was convinced that the House, instead of embarrassing, would endeavour to assist the Indian Government in this experiment, and would not, by act or language, increase their difficulties. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. Goschen said it would be recognised that silence on this important question would be equally to be condemned with excessive criticism. He was sure that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Prime Minister, and ex-Chancellors of the Exchequer, must envy the Indian Government as to the conduct of this loan operation. There was no provision for repayment, but there was a provision for reborrowing amounts paid. There was no provision with regard to the rate of interest, or the sinking fund, or the rate of payment. His contention was this, that the Indian Government's putting the Indian rupee at a higher point than it would naturally be was partly intended, or, if not intended, would have the effect of adversely affecting the balance of trade in favour of India. This was the root of the matter. The Indian taxpayer paid all in silver, and, besides that, he paid what was equivalent to £18,000,000 in gold, and, so far as the bullion he paid into the Indian Treasury was less than the arbitrary exchange fixed by the Government, so far must the Indian Exchequer lose. Was it possible, then, to fix the Indian rupee at an arbitrary rate? If appeared to him that the present position was not foreseen by the Indian Government, because there had been a failure to secure steadiness of exchange, to obtain which the experiment of closing the Mints was undertaken. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had congratulated the Indian Goveremet upon the stability which had been obtained. What stability? They could not sell their bills, and the exchange was not steady at 1s. 3¼d., although it had stood at that point because the Government would not sell their bills. Therefore the whole of the stability rested, not upon the situation, but was due to the intention of her Majesty's Government.

After some remarks from Mr. S. Smith, who supported the appeal for an inquiry into the financial condition of India, the Chancellor of the Exchequer moved the closure, and the Deputy Speaker accepted the motion.

The bill was read a second time.

THE BEHAR CADASTRAL SURVEY.

Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen asked the Under-Secretary of State for India what local officers in Bengal had been consulted as to the policy of making the Behar cadastral survey, or that of maintaining the record-of-right by an annual revision, or that of meeting the cost of those operations by fresh taxation on the land; on what principle had some of the local reports been included in the returns made to this House while others had been excluded; and whether those local reports that had hitherto been omitted from the returns could now be supplied, including the reports of Mr. Chief Secretary Cotton, Sir Henry Harrison, Mr. Halliday, Commissioners Beames, Lord Ulick Browne and Barlow, the Commissioner of Chittagong, Deputy-Commissioner Oldham, and Collectors R. H. Wilson, Power (of Chumparun), D'Oyly, and Grierson.—Mr. G Russell: (1) The Secretary of State is unable to give the names of all the local officers consulted. (2) The returns laid on the table include all the reports received from the Government of India, who appear in this matter to have followed their usual practice of submitting to the Secretary of State only such documents as are necessary to enable him to form an opinion. (3) It will be seen from the returns that the views of several of the officers named are discussed in the reports sent home by the Government of India. But the Secretary of State has no objection, if it is thought worth while, to ask the Government of India to send home the original documents specified by the hon. member.

INDIAN TROOPSHIPS.

Replying to Mr. Hanbury, Sir U. K. Shuttleworth said: The age of each of the Indian troopships is twenty-six years and six months; the average speed, 10-9 knots. Two—viz., the Crocodile and the Malabar—had had breakdowns during the present year. As I have already informed the House, the question of future arrangements for the transport of troops to India has been reported upon by an under departmental committee. That report is now under the consideration of the Indian Government, and until their views are known no statement can be made as to the accommodation to be provided hereafter. The number of troops carried is settled between the military authorities and the Admiralty on the basis of the available accommodation.

BRITISH INDIAN SUBJECTS.

On the 15th ult., in the House of Commons Sir E. Grey, replying to Mr. J. A. Pease, said: The judicial powers of the Company in Witu were exercised under the Africa Order in Council of 1889. The agreement of March 5, 1891, stipulated that the Indian Code should govern procedure under the Order, because the persons affected would be principally British Indian subjects. Justice to natives of Witu in Witu is not administered under British Orders in Council, which do not concern them, but under native law and custom. No change whatever has been made in this respect since the withdrawal of the Company's administration.

SLAVERY IN ZANZIBAR.

In the House of [illegible] on [illegible] Mr. Clare Ridley asked the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs whether it was the case that, until recently, in assuming the protectorate of countries in which slavery had previously existed her Majesty's Government had cleared themselves from the stigma of recognising the legal status of slavery; whether this policy had been carried out in India, West Africa, Cyprus, and the Malay Peninsula; and whether the recent abstention from action in the same direction in East Africa since the assumption and extension on the Zanzibar Protectorate constituted a breach of the permanent policy of the country.

Sir E. Grey: The precedents quoted refer, except in the case of Cyprus, to cases in which natives are subject to British-made laws, as in India and our West African and Malay Colonies. This is not the case in Zanzibar, where natives are under Mohammedan law which recognises the legal status of slavery. We have no knowledge that the policy, which has been that of the suppression of the slave trade and the gradual extinction of slavery, has ever undergone a change. It is the opinion of all who know the country that extinction of slavery at an early date must be the result of the decrease of 1890. The traffic in and sale of slaves is absolutely prohibited; all children of slaves born after a certain date in 1890 are declared free; every person entering the Sultan's dominions from outside is free; and it must be obvious that these provisions alone, which are strictly enforced, provide for the complete extinction of slavery within a few years. As a matter of fact the number of slaves in Zanzibar has been so diminished already that some parts of the clove plantations are going out of cultivation.

Sir C. Dilke: Will the Under-Secretary give me an answer on this point? We pressed an active policy on the Sultan while he was an independent ruler, and when we ourselves adopt the responsibility of ruling Zanzibar, which we virtually have done, we now recede from measures which we had previously pressed upon the Sultan.—Sir E. Grey said he must ask for rather longer notice of the question.—Replying to Mr. Bayley, Sir E. Grey said that many slaves had been freed under the proclamation of 1890. Slaves were employed with free men in harbour work, and consequently in coaling men-of-war. There wages were paid to them direct, and not in any case to their owners. Owners could only purchase slaves at great risk of detection, and punishment, especially as the machinery of the Slave Trade Bureau was now in operation.

THE SERVICES AT HOME.

INDIA OFFICE.—DEC., 15.

ARRIVALS REPORTED.

Mr J Groves, B	Capt C H Roe, I S C
Mr C B Williams, B	Lieut A P D Stuart, ISC
Mr W J A Bird, B	Lieut A G Medley, I S C
Mr W A Hutchinson, B	Lieut H A Vallings, ISC
Mr H H O'Farrell, M C S	Brig-Surg Lieut-Col J H Newman, B
Col G E Weston, M Inf	
Major E D F Bignell, ISC	Sub-Condr J McCormack, B
Capt S H B Hobbs, I S C	

GRANTED EXTENSION OF LEAVE.

Mr J W Muir, B C S, 6 mos	Mr N E Q Mainwaring, M, 3 mos
Mr E A Kendall, B C S, 2 mos	Mr P C H Snow, Bo C S, 8 mos
Mr W Smith, B, 7 mos	Mr G A Hight, Bo, 6 mos
Mr J W L Tooz, B, 1 mo	
Mr H F P Hall, B, 5 mos	Lieut-Col S D Turnbull, I S C, 1 yr
Mr A J Hammond, B, 6 mos	Lieut H A Lash, I S C, 6 mos
Mr L E Pritchard, B, 6 mos	Lieut C R Rowsell, RIM, 6 mos
Mr W G Newton, B, 3 days	

PERMITTED TO RETURN TO DUTY.

Mr L Nelly, B C S	Capt A Beale, I S C
Mr L C Wilkowsky, B	Lieut A C Stanley Clarke, I S C
Mr W McM Sweet, B	
Mr F Mercer, B	Lieut C H B Clark, I S C
Mr K S H Rawaji, B	Lieut F G C Humfrey, I S C
Mr R B Clegg, M C S	
Mr T M Horsfall, M C S	Lieut L M Bell, I S C
Mr K R Ramaraji, Bo C S	Lieut B A G Shelley, R E
Lt-Col G W Martin, I S C	Sec-Lt A W Guthrie
Capt M E O Donoghue, I S C	Smith, Probr for I S C
	Condr A Cheverton, M
Capt L S Peyton, I S C	

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THE ARDLAMONT SHOOTING CASE.

TRIAL OF MONSON.

ALFRED JOHN MONSON was put on trial before the Lord Justice Clerk of Scotland in the High Court of Justiciary, in Edinburgh, on Tuesday, (December 12), charged with the murder and the attempted murder of Lieutenant Windsor Dudley Cecil Hambrough at Ardlamonthouse, Argyleshire, on August 9 and 10.

The Lord Justice Clerk took his seat on the bench at half-past 10. There was a moment's expectancy, and then a harsh clang as a lever was depressed and a trapdoor was raised disclosing the stone staircase leading to the cells, two floors below the court, in which Monson had been confined since the previous night. All eyes were turned upon the slight built, fair-headed, gentlemanly looking figure in a dark Chesterfield overcoat emerging from this trap, and as he took his seat in the pew-like dock with a helmeted constable on his right and left, there was a great hush. Monson, although 35, seemed to be scarcely 25. During the preliminaries the accused turned his eyes steadfastly upon the judge and jury in turn. He appeared very pale, but perfectly collected. The usher then called upon Sweeney *alias* Davis, *alias* Scott, to appear in answer to the indictment, and receiving no answer a macer was directed to call his name outside the court. The latter having thrice called the name in Parliament-square, he returned with the reply "No answer." The Solicitor-general for Scotland, Mr. Asher, Q.C., M.P., who conducts the case for the Crown, then demanded sentence of outlawry against Scott.

Sentence of outlawry on Scott was then pronounced in the usual way.

With the Solicitor-general there appeared for the Crown Mr. J. A. Reid, Mr. J. C. Lorimer, and Mr. R. U. Strachan (advocates-depute), and Mr. J. R. Baxter (assistant-advocate-depute). The prisoner was represented by Sheriff Comrie Thomson, Mr. John Wilson, and Mr. W. Findlay (advocates). Mr. Malcolm (advocate) appeared to watch the case on behalf of Major Hambrough, father of the deceased.

The judge having asked Monson if he adhered to his plea of "Not guilty," tendered at the former sitting of the court, the prisoner replied, in a distinct, firm, sweet-toned voice, "I do, my lord," and a jury of 15 was then selected from 45 who had been summoned.

After two jurymen had been challenged the indictment was read by the clerk. It charged Alfred John Monson, prisoner in the prison of Edinburgh, and Edward Sweeney, *alias* Davis, *alias* Scott, sometime residing at Ardlamonthouse, parish of Kilfinan Argyleshire, at the instance of the Right Hon. John Blair Balfour her Majesty's advocate, that they formed the design of causing, by drowning, the death of Windsor Dudley Cecil Hambrough, sometime residing at Ardlamonthouse, did in execution thereof bore or cause to be bored in the side of a boat, the property of Donald M'Kellar, boat hirer, Tignabruaich, Argyleshire a hole; and, having plugged or closed the said hole, did, on August 9, 1893, induce the said Windsor Dudley Cecil Hambrough to embark along with Alfred John Monson in the said boat; that Alfred John Monson, in execution of the said design, did, in Ardlamont bay, in the Firth of Clyde, while the said boat was in deep water, remove or cause to be removed the plug from the said hole and admit the water into and did sink the said boat, whereby the said Windsor Dudley Cecil Hambrough was thrown into the sea; and that they did thus attempt to murder him; and, secondly, that on August 10, 1893, at a part of a wood situated about 360 yards or thereby in an easterly or north-easterly direction from Ardlamonthouse, they did shoot the said Windsor Dudley Cecil Hambrough and kill him and did thus murder him; and that Edward Davis, *alias* Sweeney, *alias* Scott, being conscious of his guilt in the premises, did abscond and flee from justice.

As the Scottish criminal procedure dispenses with an opening speech by counsel, the court at once proceeded to take evidence.

Mr. James Brand, C. E., Glasgow, was the first witness. He proved plans of the grounds, &c., made by him in October. In addition to a large plan, consisting of two sheets of the Ordnance map, a special plan of the plantation behind the house was produced showing the places where Monson, Scott, and Hambrough were last seen and the position of the body when found. The witness went on to say that the distance from the place where Hambrough's head was lying, after he was found dead, to the rowan tree was 6ft. 6in.; from the rowan tree to the beech tree, 13ft. 9in.; and from the rowan tree to the stem of the lime tree, 16ft. 3in. Before the tree was uprooted he took pieces of paper, fitted them to the branches underneath where they were broken by pellets, and took the levels at which they all were. The first branch of the rowan tree was 4ft. 8in. above the surface of the ground where the tree stood. No. 2 was 5ft. 4in., and No. 3 was 6ft. 10in. On the beech tree there was a pellet mark 8ft. 6in. above the level of the ground where the rowan tree stood. One branch of the lime tree was 7ft. 3in. and another 6ft. 8in. above the surface of the ground where the rowan tree stood and directly in line. The wood at the south near the schoolhouse was principally a birch wood, and the trees were of considerable age. There was practically no undergrowth to speak of, and the trunks of the trees were fairly large. There was a level plateau and then it sloped down to the level of the wood. Walking from the schoolhouse on the right-hand side of the wood the sunk fence was on the right. From where the head of Hambrough was found to the edge of the sunk fence was 2ft. or 3ft. The space in the wood where the body was found was comparatively level. A little to the south or south-west there was a whin bush. Immediately to the south and west of where the body was found were some whins and other undergrowth. It was quite impossible to see the place where the body was found from the schoolhouse.

Cross-examined by Mr. Comrie Thomson, the witness said his surveys were made two months, less six days, after the accident. His information on the prints he referred to depended entirely on the statements of Dunn, and as regarded position of the body, on those of the Procurator Fiscal and the gardener.

So that if it be true that the dead man fell or was found lying on the other side of the sunk fence, your calculations with relation to the rowan tree, the beech tree, and the lime tree, and the direction of the pellets would be discredited?—Yes.

THE BUTLER'S STORY.

James Wright, butler, aged 22, stated that he was engaged at a registry in Glasgow, and went to Ardlamonthouse on August 9. He was the only man-servant. Mr. and Mrs. Monson, Scott, and Hambrough were at luncheon on Auguts 9. He waited also at dinner at 8, when the governess was of the party. Scott was treated as one of the party. He noticed no difference. After dinner he was told to sit up for the gentlemen, as they were going out fishing. In the night one came back for a lamp. He thought it was Hambrough. He said the boat had sunk and they had swum ashore. About half-an-hour afterwards he heard them in the smoking-room. He went to Mr. Monson's and Mr. Hammbrough's rooms, and found their clothes wringing wet. He went to bed about two, leaving them in the smoking-room. When he got up at seven all the gentlemen were up before him. Hambrough got a biscuit and milk. He did not see the others, but knew they were not in their rooms. Later, he thought about nine, he saw Monson and Scott, and Monson told him that Hambrough had shot himself and was quite dead. He said the body was just in the wood. Witness went to the shrubbery, but could not find it. Monson said he would show him. They went out past the stables, where they saw White, the gardener, and Carmichael, the coachman. Monson took him to the body along by the fence, straight from the offices. The body was lying on the wall by the side of the ditch, with the head inclining to the left, the right arm straight, and the left across the breast. Monson said, "What shall we do?" Witness said. "Send for a doctor," which was done. Hambrough appeared to be dead. The body was rolled in a rug, and witness noticed a wound in the head. A cart was got from a man near at hand, and the body was taken to the house before 10 o'clock. Mrs. Monson was at Glasgow and the governess, Miss Hiron, was with her. Monson and Scott were sticking together all the morning. Witness asked Scott if he would not wait until the inquiry was over, but he said his business took him away. Scott was present at luncheon before going away with Monson, the factor, and the doctor. The witness than spoke of the visit of Mr. Tottenham and Major Hambrough, and of the removal of the body. Shooting went on a few days afterwards. He had not seen Scott before he went to Ardlamont, nor since. Scott was about 28 or 30, rather dark and thin, delicate, with a slight moustache. Witness thought he was a tradesman of some kind, but he appeared to be treated as an ordinary visitor.

In cross-examination, witness said all the party seemed to be on good terms. At luncheon on the 10th the party appeared to be sorry for what had happened, and did not talk much. When Mrs. Monson returned she was much distressed and did not appear at dinner. She went to bed.

THE GARDENER.

Archibald Whyte, gardener for three years at Ardlamont, spoke to Mr. Monson's arrival. On August 10, when on the beach, he heard shots from the woods, about seven in the morning. After working some time at the bay he went back to the garden, and was standing in the arch which led into his house, when Monson came from the house, Carmichael was with witness. Wright was with Monson. When they came up Monson said that young Hambrough had shot himself, and told witness to find something in which to take the body up to the house. He found

ANARCHIST OUTRAGE IN PARIS.

BOMB THROWN IN THE FRENCH CHAMBER.

A DIABOLICAL outrage was committed during a sitting of the French Chamber of Deputies on Saturday afternoon (Dec. 9) by a French Anarchist named Vaillant, who threw a bomb filled with large nails from one of the galleries into the midst of the Chamber. The bomb exploded almost immediately after being thrown, and, consequently, the fragments of iron with which it was filled fell principally in the galleries, and the majority of the injured were strangers. No lives were lost, but over sixty persons were injured.

The *Times'* correspondent describes the scene thus:—Of a sudden, mingling itself with the diffused glow that falls from the ceiling where the electric light burns behind glass, there shot a sort of dull red gleam just above the heads of the Conservatives, and immediately following this, like the report of two or three duelling pistols, the sound of an explosion was heard. Smoke instantly settled under the ceiling along the upper gallery, thick and white, and through it I could see people rushing from those places in front of me and hear cries from that quarter and from the benches below. The deputies of the right and the Socialists of that side were in commotion. There was a rain of something hard upon my head, and something struck the pillar in front of me. It was a nail. I saw M. Dupuy put his hand to his head as if he had been hit. Deputies were now running from the centre to aid stunned or wounded colleagues. The Abbe Lemire was standing up wiping the back of his neck, which was bleeding, with a handkerchief. He tottered, and was assisted by M. d'Hulst and another colleague until, fainting, he was carried out. Half-a-dozen deputies, guarded on either side by friends, with the blood running from their faces were led out of the Chamber, dropping blood as they went along. Meanwhile the smoke seemed to settle in dust, and an indescribable odour filled the air. Even on the desks on the far side of the House a covering of dust had fallen and big horse-shoe nails were lying everywhere. In the real centre and on the left, and even in most of the other galleries no one had moved. The physical sensation experienced by almost everybody was that of being stunned. Nine-tenths of the deputies, though profundly moved, yet kept their places.

The moment after the explosion occured every screw was closed. Several deputies were seriously hurt, among others being M. Cazenove de Pradines, deputy for the Loire Inferieure, MM. de Lamuinais and Leclech, deputies for the Morbihan, and M. Gouter, member for the Vosges, a journalist. M. Berton Trebois was seen crossing the floor of the House, his face covered with blood. Of the ladies, among those injured the greatest sufferer of all was a Mdme. Malley, whose knee-cap was fractured. The doctors declare that even if she recovers she will be injured for life. An Austrian lady, dressed in the height of fashion, named Mantel, had her forehead laid open by a slashing wound. Col. Hasurel, a Roumanian officer, was hit in the neck and hand. Medical assistance was promptly obtained for the sufferers, and the Palais Bourbon was for the time converted into a vast hospital. None but deputies and well-known frequenters were allowed to leave the building, and many of the injured, after being attended to, were placed under arrest.

M. Dupuy, the President, who had himself been slightly wounded in the head, set the example of sang froid by calling upon the deputies to resume their seats. In a clear voice, he said, "A crime of this sort, whoever may be its author and whatever may be its character, must not be allowed, to disturb the deliberations of the Chamber. The dignity of Parliament requires the continuation of the debate. When the Order of the Day is disposed of, the officers of the House will do their duty."

After a brief interruption the business before the Chamber was proceeded with. At the close of the sitting the Premier, M. Casimir-Perier, announced that the Government intended to enforce public order and the laws for the protection of society. M. Dupuy congratulated the Chamber on having preserved its calmness and proceeded with its duties. The President was loudly cheered by the deputies with the exception of the Extreme Socialists, who kept a moody silence.

VAILLANT'S CONFESSION.

As the result of the searching investigation which was immediately instituted, the author of the outrage was, after considerable trouble, identified. He is a notorious Anarchist named Vaillant, and all doubt as to his criminality has been removed by his own vainglorious confession. The prisoner had been living under the name of Marchal, at 17, Rue de la Raffinerie, at Choisy-le-Roi, and had another lodging in Paris, at 70 Rue Daguerre. He had been slightly wounded in the leg and on the nose, and had been when he was pressed with questions by the detectives who had charge of him, and at last he made a clean breast of it. In answer to questions Vaillant stated that he went to the Chamber with the intention of throwing his infernal machine on to the President's table. He waited more than an hour for a favorable opportunity, and then, thinking it had at last arrived, he rose and hurled the tin box into the body of the House. At that moment a woman sitting in front of him, resenting his leaning over her, pushed back, and thus prevented him from throwing the bomb exactly as he had intended. The machine struck the edge of the gallery, and at once exploded. According to his account, the bomb was small in size, and contained "green powder"—a species of chlorated powder, of which the method of manufacture has been described in the Anarchist prints. Vaillant added that he had worked at the tannery of Choisy-le-Roi. His motive, he said, was that he was "sick of this bourgeois society." The police on Sunday afternoon searched his house at Choisy-le-Roi, and found material that confirms the confession made by him.

Vaillant, who continues to rail against the "bourgeoisie," says the infernal machine was not constructed with the object of killing. His purpose was to wound about 150 or 200 Deputies, and especially to injure M. Casimir-Perier.

Vaillant was on Monday removed from the hospital to the prison. He will not be examined by the magistrate until he has recoverd from his injuries, but he was on Monday visited by the Minister of Justice, who asked him what were his motives for the crime. Vaillant replied that it was useless to explain to the Minister, as he was a bourgeois, and could not understand.

It is averred that no less than ten well-known Anarchists were in the gallery of the Chamber with Vaillant when the latter threw the bomb.

HIS CAREER.

Some additional particulars concerning Vaillant's career are furnished by the correspondent of the *Daily News*, who says that he (Vaillant) has at times the gaze of a visionary, and again looks as cunning as a weak and wild animal in the habit of being pursued or hungering for prey. He has long been under the surveillance of the police, and observed all the formalities that his position as a supervised gaol-bird required. One wonders that the fact of his having taken two lodgings—one for, as he says, the manufacture of bombs and the other to live in—did not strike the Argus-eyed department which was bound to watch him. All the time that he was under surveillance for his last penal offence he was organising revolutionary meetings and lectures, and had set up an Anarchist society at Choisy-le-Roi under the name of the Society of Philosophical Studies. He organised a band of plausible talkers to give village lectures on all kinds of subjects about which rustics might like to be well informed. He cleared one day with his band £20 in a tour round villages south of Paris. The lectures were on the microbes of the mouth and nostrils, which were shown on the field of the microscope, and on antiseptic mouth-washes and snuffs. Peasants, terrified at the organisms revealed to them bought freely the wares offered. Vaillant's movements do not seem to have been in any way hampered by the surveillance exercised over him, and he breathed threatenings and slaughter against society at Anarchist meetings. A fortnight ago he seems to have had a scheme for collecting Socialists and Revolutionists under his banner, perhaps to sell them or their votes. To this end he gave up his situation in a fancy leather factory, and advertised in the *Revolte* that he wanted to found a popular library, to further which aim he appealed to Socialist authors and scientific men. He asked them to send copies of their writings. A police agent was sent to find out what his real motive was, and went to Vaillant's home to see him there. He was instructed to go as an Anarchist workman. They conversed some time on the subject, Vaillant saying that he wanted to be able to manipulate at will every Anarchist of the district of Petitpont. It was not he, but another Vaillant, an ex-navel officer, who was the "gerant" of Malon's "Socialist Review." The gaol-bird Vaillant got into his hands the Blanquists. He patronised at Decazeville the candidature of M. Ernest Roche as one of protest against M. Bourgeois, and got a manifesto signed "Aug. Vaillant," published in the "Intransigeant." He was at this time professing revolutionary doctrines, and under police surveillance; but as M. Lose is Ambassador at Vienna and M. le Vaillant is no longer Director of Public Safety there is not anyone in office to explain why impunity was granted this bomb flinger.

On Dec. 13 the correspondent visited the mother of Vaillant, and obtained from her further facts respecting the early life of the criminal. He was educated by the brothers of a religious order, and was always an exemplary scholar, receiving numerous prizes for good behaviour. While with them he served in chapel as altar boy, and at one period had thoughts of becoming a missionary. His mother states that the beginning of his downfall was an intense desire to find his father and it was while on this quest in Corsica that he was first sentenced to imprisonment as a vagabond.

PROMPT GOVERNMENT ACTION.

When the Chamber met on Dec. 11 most of the traces of the bomb outrage had been removed. There was a large attendance of deputies, and at the outset the President announced the measures it had been decided to take for the protection of members of the Chamber, including strict surveillance of persons admitted to the public galleries. The Premier brought forward four measures for the repression and prevention of Anarchist outrages—making incitement to such outrages in the Press a penal offence, making new regulations as to the manufacture of explosives, extending the powers of the police for the repression of Anarchist outrages, and providing for police supervision of Anarchist societies. He also asked for an extraordinary credit of Rs. 32,000 for the increase of the police force. In submitting the bills, the Premier said the Government was resolved to do its duty in the maintenance of order, and asked for urgency. A long discussion ensued. M. Goblet and some Extremist and Socialist deputies insisted that time ought to be given to the Chamber to consider the proposed measures, while M. Casimir-Perier made the immediate discussion of the Press Bill a question of confidence. Ultimately the Press Bill was carried by 413 to 63 votes, and sent up to the Senate. In that body the President, M. Challemel-Lacour delivered a brief speech, energetically denouncing the outrage of Saturday and the general tendencies of Anarchism. At the close of the sitting the Press Bill was unanimously declared urgent.

The Bureaux of the Senate, on Dec. 12, unanimously passed the bill, which was promulgated on Dec. 13.

The Moderate Republican journals in Paris are agreed in approving the modifications of the Press Law voted in the Chamber on Monday, but the Radical papers taunt the Government with having yielded to a feeling of panic.

In the House of Lords on Tuesday, Dec. 12.—The Earl of Kimberley suggested that a communication should be sent to the French Chamber and its President expressing the sympathy of their lordships with them and their horror at the atrocious crime which had been perpetrated in the Chamber on Saturday last.—The Marquis of Salisbury said the proposal would meet with unanimous assent, and he thought the Government had taken a very suitable and graceful course in making it. He remarked upon the peculiarity of these recent outrages, that they were wholly without object and represented merely a lust for blood; and hoped that the Governments's expression of horror would not be entirely without result, but might be regarded as a pledge that if any international steps were taken to put down these wicked outrages the British Government would take its share in achieving so humane a result.

In the Chamber, on Dec. 12, M. Dupuy announced that he had received numerous messages of sympathy and reprobation of the outrage from foreign Governments and Legislatures, including that from the Speaker of the House of Commons. M. Dupuy, in the name of the Chamber, expressed deep gratitude to the Governments and Assemblies for their valued testimony of sympathy.

The Paris police, on Dec. 13, searched the house of M. Reclus, a civil engineer, and nephew of the geographer of that name, and seized some papers. M. Reclus admits having received a letter from Vaillant just prior to the outrage in the Chamber, but says, whilst favourable to Anarchist ideas, he is not connected with the active party.

M. Zola, who has been interviewed on the subject, said the propagation of Anarchist theories could be prevented by religious faith, which, however, he suggested, had almost disappeared.

GREAT BRITAIN, FRANCE, CHINA AND SIAM.

YELLOW BOOK ON THE BUFFER STATE.

THE correspondence between the British and French Governments with regard to the Mekong Buffer State has been published. It shows that an agreement was signed by M. Develle and Lord Dufferin in July, accepting the principal of a neutral zone on the Mekong; and that on Nov. 25 another protocol was signed, agreeing to the appointment of technical agents to inquire on the spot into the limits and geographical configuration of the districts, setting forth the nature of the proposed investigation and the extent it is proposed to assign to the neutral zone, and also stipulating that [illegible] transit, and means of communication shall be equally [illegible] powers. M. Develle and Lord Dufferin, on Dec. 1, exchanged letters, each stating that his Government had not yet entered into any treaty with the Chinese Government concerning the State of Xien-Hong, and had no intention of seeking any monopoly of transit or communication in that State to the detriment of the other Power.

The Yellow Book contains a letter addressed by M. Casimir-Perier, Premier and Minister for Foreign Affairs, to M. Lobon, Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. The letter is dated Dec. 4, and runs as follows:—

"Your Administration has been kept verbally informed of the pourparlers entered into by my Department with the British Government in reference to the creation of an intermediary zone between our possessions and the British possessions in Southern Indo-China. I now think it desirable to forward to you the principal documents relating to the negotiations. The bases of these negotiations were in June last embodied in a document of which you will herewith receive the text, and which was signed by my predecessor and by Lord Dufferin on the 31st of the same month.

"As a result of the first pourparlers which took place between M. Develle and Lord Dufferin, these two gentlemen decided to entrust to Special Committee the task of considering the limits to be fixed for the zone in question. For this purpose my predecessor appointed M. Jusserand, Assistant Director of the Department for the North and extreme East; and M. Revail, Chief of the Foreign Affairs Department; while Lord Dufferin appointed Mr. Phipps, Secretary of Embassy, and Mr. Austin Lee, Secretary of Legation. The Commitee held its sittings at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the first taking place on October 16. The map prepared by the Pavie Expedition was accepted by both sides for use by the committee in their labours.

"The conclusion of the agreement regarding the frontiers, for which the comittee was appointed, was found impossible. The boundaries proposed by both sides differed materially, and the absence of precise information regarding the political limits of the territories in question compelled the committee to suspend its labours until supplementary information has been gathered on the spot.

"It has only just become possible to proceed with the determination of the limits of the territories in question, and some questions which are not whithout importance have been settled, at least in principle. Thus it has been mutually agreed that navigation, transit, and means of communication are to remain free from all hinderance in the neutral zone, each of the contracting parties undertaking not to seek any advantage which is not equally assured to the other.

"Consequently two documents, the text of which is appended, have been signed. The first states the necessity felt by the members of the committee of suspending their sittings until they are in possession of supplementary information.

"In the second, my predecessor and the British Ambassador have considered the points to be examined by the committee in the course of its labours, and to which it appeared desirable that the attention of the delegates despatched to the spot should also be directed.

"As you will perceive, the mission with which these delegates have been charged will be reduced simply to a mission of inquiry. They are charged simply to collect information, to remove the difficulties which might arise, and settle the differences of opinion amongst them the definite decision being reserved to the Governments themselves. In this manner all obstacles will be removed, and the prompt execution of the proposals adopted by the two Governments will thus be assured.

"Finally, it having become evident that the value of the agreement relating to freedom of navigation and transit in the zone to be constituted would have been greatly diminished if one of the two Powers had reserved in the province of Xien-Hong, situated to the north of the said zone, exclusive advantages, an exchange of letters took place between my predecessor and the British Ambassador, in order that no doubt might exist in this respect. It is clear, from the documents, of which you will find copies appended that no monopoly, whether for railways or water ways, or any other means of transit or communication, will be sought by one of the two contracting parties to the determent of the other."

THE following Parliamentary Papers have been issued:—(1) East India and Burma (Railway Concessions). Copy of Resolution issued by the Government of India, stating the Conditions under which Concessions are given to Companies seeking to construct Railways in India and Burma. 452. Price 2d. (2) Copies of Despatches from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, relative to the agreement between Great Britain and France for constituting a neutral State between their possessios in Indo-China. Price 1d.

STRENGTH OF THE NAVY.

GREAT MEETING IN THE CITY.

THE subject of our naval defences was considered on Dec. 12, at a crowded meeting of merchants, traders, professional men, and others, convened by the London Chamber of Commerce, over which Sir A. Rollit, M. P., presided.

The Chairman, in opening the proceedings, deprecated any manifestation of party politics. They were met, not as partisans, but as patriots. That meeting showed a determination to have for this country not only security but a sense of security—(cheers)—and also that confidence which was the very basis of our commerce. (Cheers.) The average tonnage of our merchantile marine was 12,500,000 tons, of France 1,000,000 tons, and of Russia 500,000 tons. Then taking the value of our seaborne commerce, in Britain it was worth £970,000,000, in France £277,000,000, in Russia £55,000,000. ("Oh.") And yet France paid in the shape of naval insurance over 100 per cent., Russia 160 per cent.; and ourselves the comparatively small sum of 10 per cent.

Mr. C. T. Ritchie moved: "That this meeting views with deep concern and anxiety the present state of our navy, and urgently presses upon the Government the necessity of taking immediate steps to provide such additional means of defence as shall afford that security which our Empire and our commerce demand." He said that so far as the present position of the navy was concerned we had not much cause of complaint; but when we looked at the immediate future the case was totally different.

The motion having been seconded by Mr. Wilkins,

Lord Roberts, who was received with loud cheers said: I am glad to have been asked to support this resolution as a representative of her Majesty's Army, for in common, I believe, with every soldier—I might almost say every Britisher—who has studied the subject, I recognise that the efficiency of the navy should be our first care, for is it not our foremost and main line of defence? (Cheers.) Wherever our troops may be called upon to take the field they could not hope to be successful without the co-operation of the sister service. In fact, we could hardly undertake the military operations that might be necessary for the protection of British territory and British interests in any part of the world unless our maritime superiority were fully assured. (Cheers.) Now, the problem which the British nation has to consider at the present time is briefly this. Our Empire is widely scattered, and a great part of the population not only gains its livelihood by our foreign trade, but obtains a very large proportion of its food supplies from abroad. Our seaborne commerce, moreover, enormously exceeds that of any other Power, and the security of that seaborne commerce is of the most vital importance to the United Kingdom. (Hear, hear.) On the other hand, we see that two foreign nations (France and Russia), whose maritime commerce is comparatively insignificant, and whose colonial possessions are of very minor importance—nations, too, it must be remembered, which are self contained, and self supporting—are each of them spending nearly as much on naval construction as we are. The actual figures for the current year are, I understand, £2,918,000 for France, £2,692,000 for Russia, and £2,982,000 for England. Every nation has, of course, the right to spend what it thinks proper on its army and navy; but it is for us, a matter of ordinary prudence to consider what will be the effect on our own position of the rapid growth of the French and Russian navies. It appears to me to be inevitable that, unless we take the requisite steps to ensure our continuance of the undisputed mastership of the sea, by strengthening our navy in proportion as the navies of other European Powers are strengthened, it will not be long before we shall have lost that naval supremacy which is essential to our national greatness and to our national existence. Great Britain does not want to go to war. (Hear, hear.) She is threatening no one. All she asks is to be left undisturbed in the possession of her Empire and the development of her commerce. (Cheers.) Why, then, should our European neighbours, whose maritime interests are in no way menaced by the naval superiority of this country, endeavour to wrest from us that command of the sea which is so necessary to our national life and independence? (Cheers.) I leave it to you, gentlemen, to answer that question. I will only add that it is a question of not so much importance for the rich as for the poor. Under the Continental system of protection our goods are gradually being excluded from almost every European market, and if the working classes are to live and thrive we must find fresh outlets for our trade in our Colonies and dependencies. (Hear, hear.) Above all, we must most jealously guard the unrestricted import of raw material and food, without which our industrial population would be thrown out of employment and actually reduced to starvation. Fortunately this is not a party question; but, even if it were, there are things more important than [illegible] tenance of the naval supremacy of the British Empire. (Cheers.)

Sir John Colomb reminded the meeting that the Empire of India had grown up under the protection of our navy—that great Empire where Lord Roberts had won his laurels. (Cheers). Eighty-eight years ago we had no oversea military frontiers to protect abroad, but now those frontiers were in length equal to half the diameter of the earth. (Cheers.) Our great struggle for naval supremacy closed on Oct. 21, 1805, and since that time we had, with some exceptions of comparatively little moment, enjoyed peace on the sea. But during that period there had been the bloodiest and most costly contests on land which the history of the world had ever known. (Cheers.) Not many days after the remains of Nelson had been laid in St. Paul's his Majesty's Ministers, so far from being unduly elated by our glorious victories, proposed an addition of £3,000,000 to the Naval Estimates. (Cheers.) For the next sixty-five years it was the continuous policy of this country to maintain such a navy as would preserve unimpaired our indisputable superiority over the sea. From the death of Nelson there was a continuous increase of naval expenditure. In 1805 we spent £15,000,000; in 1806, £19,000,000; and in 1814-15, £22,000,000 on the navy. But from 1870 to 1884 a lethargy came over the nation. But nine years ago—chiefly in consequence of the action of the City—(cheers)—the country was roused and the Northbrook programme was launched. When that programme was carried out it was found we had the ships, but not the equipments. Then came the Salisbury programme, which was an improvement on its predecessor. Even that programme was hardly adequate, because we should have such a navy as would effectually confine our enemies to their own harbours. (Cheers.) The Salisbury programme was now exhausted, and it was our duty to strengthen the Government in the production of such a programme as the needs of the country demanded. (Cheers.) The whole nation would have enthusiastic satisfaction in supporting the Government to rise to the examples of British Ministers of the past. (Cheers.) The most startling fact of the last generation had been the increased dependence of the people on the safe transit of our commerce. At the time of Trafalgar one ton of shipping was sufficient for the annual wants of seven inhabitants, whereas now each dweller in these islands commanded the services of two tons of shipping. (Cheers.) Another consideration was the diminution of the margin of profit. To secure even that margin insurance must be as cheap and efficient as possible; and an overwhelming fleet was needed to keep that insurance at as low a point as possible. (Cheers.) From a return which he had obtained he found, acting on the principle of the Salisbury programme, that our fleet should be equal to those of the two leading maritime Powers, that the following results emerged: On Aug. 15 he found that we had twenty-four battleships in commission; in reserve, ten; and in building or completing, nine—total, forty-three. The two leading maritime Powers had—battleships in commission, thirty; in reserve, eight; building and completing, fifteen, or a total of fifty-three. (Hear, hear.) The figures for France and Russia were—in commission, twenty-four (the same as ours); in reserve, seven; building and completing for sea, sixteen; or a total of forty-seven. We compared unfavorably also with the Triple Alliance the number of whose battleships under the several heads was twenty, fifteen, and twelve, or a total of forty-seven. He emphasised the necessity of absolutely protecting with a throughly efficient navy a commerce which was three times as valuable as those of France and Russia combined. (Cheers.)

Mr. Sutherst moved, as an amendment, to strike out the final clause of the resolution and substitute the words "and to continue and expand the policy of the Naval Defence Act, 1889, and provide such battleships, cruisers, and men as should enable Great Britain to defend the interest of the Empire against any combination of Naval Powers, regardless of cost." He said he thought that the resolution as proposed was far too weak.

The Chairman having pointed out the advantage of being unanimous, the amendment was not pressed, and the resolution was agreed to amid loud cheers.

Mr. D. Macfarlane, M.P., moved the second resolution:—"That this meeting is further convinced that in any financial scheme necessary in the public interests, the Government may be assured of the hearty support of the Commercial community."

Mr. W Allan, M.P., in seconding the resolution, said that Britain's commerce had made Britain what she was, and they as citizens were determined that her commercial greatness should not be menaced. Britain must stand as she had almost since the days of King Alfred, mistress of the seas. If they had a weak Chancellor of the Exchequer they must strengthen his back, and make him alive to the requirements of the nation.

The resolution was passed with acclamation.

Mr. Annan Bryce said the Treasury was the trouble after all. He moved that copies of the resolution should be sent to the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the First Lord of the Admiralty, and the Secretary of State for War.

THE RHYME OF THE THREE SEALERS.

(By RUDYARD KIPLING.)

"... and reports some trouble among the poachers off the Russian rookeries."—*Daily Paper.*

AWAY by the lands of the Japanese
When the paper lanterns glow
And the crews of all the shipping drink
In the house of Blood Street Joe,
At twilight when the landward breeze
Brings up the harbour noise,
And ebb of Yokohama Bay
Swigs chattering through the buoys,
In Cisco's Dewdrop Dining Rooms
They tell the tale anew
Of a hidden sea and a hidden fight
When the Baltic ran from the Northern Light
And the Straisund fought the two.

Now this is the law of the Muscovite, that he proves with shot and steel,
When ye come by his isles in the Smoky Sea ye must not take the seal,
Where the grey sea goes nakedly between the weed-hung shelves,
And the little blue fox he is bred for his skin and the seal they breed for themselves;
For When the *motkas* seek the shore to drop their pups aland
The great man-seals haul out of the sea, aroaring, hand by hand;
And when the first September gales have slaked their rutting-wrath,
The great man-seals go back to the sea and no man knows their path.
Then dark they lie and stark they lie—rookery, dune, and floe,
And the Northern Lights come down o' nights to dance with the housless snow.
But since our women must walk gay and money buys their gear,
The sealing-boats they filch that way at hazard year by year.
English they be and Japanee that hang on the Brown Bear's flank,
And some be Scot, but the worst God wot, and the boldest thieves, be Yank!
It was the sealer Northern Light, to the Smoky Seas she bore
With a stove-pipe stuck from her star-board port and the Russian flag at her fore.
(Baltic, Straisund, and Northern Light—oh! they were birds of a feather—
Slipping away to the Smoky Seas, three seal-thieves together!)
And at last she came to a sandy cove and the Baltic lay therein,
But her men were up with the herding seal to drive and club and skin.
There were fifteen hundred skins aboach, cool pelt and proper fur,
When the Northern Light drove into the bay and the sea-mist drove with her.
The Baltic called her men and weighed—she could not choose but run—
For a stove-pipe seen through the closing mist, it shows like a four-inch gun
(And loss it is that is sad as death to lose both trip and ship
And lie for a rotting contraband on Vladivostock slips).
She turned and dived in the sea-smother as a rabbit dives in the wrack,
And the Northern Light sent up her boats to steal the stolen skins.
They had not brought a load to side or slid their hatches clear,
When they were aware of a sloop-of-war, ghost-white and very near.
Her flag she showed and her guns she showed, three of them, black, abeam,
And a funnel grey with the crusted salt, but never a show of steam.
There was no time to man the bars, they knocked the shackle free,
And the Northern Light stood out again goose-winged to open sea.
(For life it is that is worse than death, by force of Russian law
To work in the mines of mercury that loose the teeth in your jaw.)
They had not run a mile from shore—they heard no shots behind—
When the skipper smote his hand on his thigh and threw her up in the wind:
"Bluffed—raised out on a bluff," said he, "for if my name's Tom Hall
"You must set a thief to catch a thief—and a thief has caught us all!
"By every butt in Oregon and every spar in Maine,
"The hand that spilled the wind from her sail was the hand of Reuben Paine!
"He has rigged and trigged her with paint and spar, and, faith, he has faked her well—
"But I'd know the Straisund's deckhouse yet from here to the booms o' Hell.
"Oh, once we ha' met at Baltimore, and twice on Boston pier.
"But the sickest day for you, Reuben Paine, was the day that you came here—
"The day that you came here, my lad, to scare us from our seal
With your funnel made o' your painted cloth, and your guns o' rotten deal!
"Ring and blow for the Baltic now, and head her back to the bay,
"For we'll come into the game again with a double hand to play!"
They rang and blew the sealers' call—the poaching cry of the sea—
And they raised the Baltic out of the mist, and an angry boat was she;
And blind they groped through the Whirling White and blind to the bay again,
Till they heard the swing of the Straisun's boom, and the clank of her mooring chain.
They laid them down by bitt and boat, their pistols in their belts,
And:—"Will you fight for it, Reuben Paine, or will you share the pelts?"
A dog-toothed laugh laughed Reuben Paine, and bared his flenching knife.
"Yea, skin for skin, and all that he hath a man will give for his life;
But I've six thousand skins below, and Yeddo Port to see,
And there's never a law of God or man runs north of Fifty Three.
So go in peace to the naked seas with empty holds to fill,
And I'll be good to your seal this catch, many as I shall kill.
Get out of this before you foul—the fog's as blind as a pup,
And fog or clear, you'll not come here to hold the Straisund up!"
Answered the snap of a closing lock and the jar of a gunbutt slid,
But the tender fog shut fold on fold to hide the wrong they did;
The Weeping fog rolled fold on fold the wrath of man to cloak,
And the flame-spurts pale ran down the rail as the scaling-rifles spoke.
The bullets drummed on bend and butt, the splinter slivered free,
(Little they trust to sparrow-dust that stop the seal in his sea!)
The thick smoke hung and would not shift, leaden it lay and blue,
But three were down on the Baltic's deck and two of the Straisund's crew.
An arm's length out and overside the banked fog held them bound,
And as they heard or groan or word they fired at the sound.
For one cried out on the name of God, and one to have him cease,
And the questing volley found them both and bade them hold their peace.
And in the waiting silences the rudder whined beneath
And each man drew his watchful breath slow taken 'tween the teeth—
Trigger and oar and eye acock, knit brow and hard-drawn lips—
Brashing his feet by chock and cleat for the rolling of the ships.
Till they heard the cough of a wounded man that fought in the fog for breath,
Till they heard the torment of Reuben Paine that wailed upon his death:—
"The tides they'll go through Fundy race but I'll go never more.
"And see the hogs from ebb-tide mark turn scampering back to shore.
"No more I'll see the trawlers drift below the Bass Rock ground,
And watch the tall Fall steamer lights tear blazing up the Sound.
"Sorrow is me, in a lonely sea and a sinful fight I fell,
But if there's law of God or man you'll swing for it yet Tom Hall!"
Tom Hall stood up by the quarter-rail. "Your words in your teeth," said he.
"There's never a law of God or man runs north of Fifty Three."
"So go in peace with Him to face, and an ill-spent life behind,
"And I'll take care of your widows, Rube, as many as I shall find.
"For one you have left at Kennebunk and one on Vita Beach,
"And a yellow girl at Tomiok'; but I'll be good to each."
A Stralsund man shot blind and large, and a warlock Finn was he,
And he hit Tom Hall with a bursting ball a handsbreadth over the knee.
Tom Hall caught hold by the topping-lift, and sat him down with an oath,
"You'll wait a little, Rube," he said, "the Devil has called for both.
"The Devil is driving both this tide, and the killing-grounds are close,
"And we'll go up to the Wrath of God as the hollus-chickie goes.
"Oh, men, put back your guns again and lay your rifles by,
"We've fought our fight and the best are down. Let up and let us die!
"Quit firing, by the bow there—quit Call off the Baltic's crew!
"You're sure of Hell as me or Rube—but wait till we get through."
There went no word between the ships, but thick and quick and loud
The life-blood drummed on the dripping decks, with the fog dew from the shroud,
The sea-pull drew them side by side, gunnel to gunnel laid,
And they felt the sheerstrakes pound and clear, but never a word was said.
Then Reuben Paine cried out again before his spirit passed:—"Have I followed the sea for thirty years to die in the dark at last?
"Curse on her work that has nipped me here with a shifty trick unkind—
"I have gotten my death where I got my bread, but I dare not face it blind.
"Curse on the fog! Is there never a wind of all the winds I knew
"To clear the smother from off my chest, and let me look at the blue?"
The good fog heard—like a splitten sail, to left and right it tore,
And they saw the sun-dogs in the haze and the seal upon the shore.
Silver and grey ran spit and bay to meet the steel-backed tide,
And pinched and white in the clearing light the crews stared overside.
O rainbow-gay the red pools lay that swilled and spilled and spread,
And gold, raw gold, the spent shell rolled between the careless dead—
The dead that rocked so drunkenwise to weather and to lee,
And they saw the work their hands had done as God had bade them see.
And a little breeze blew over the rail that made the headsails lift,
But no man stood by wheel or sheet, and they let the schooners drift.
And a rattle rose in Reuben's throat and he cast his soul with a cry,
And "Gone already?" Tom Hall he said. "Then it's time for me to die."
His eyes were heavy with great sleep and yearning for the land,
And he spoke as a man that talks in dreams, and his head upon his hand.
[illegible] no good in the westering wind that backs against the sun,
"Wash down the decks—they're all too red—and share the skins and run.
"Baltic, Straisund, and Northern Light,—clean share and share for all,
"Yon'll find the fleets off Tolstoi Mees, but you will not find Tom Hall.
"Evil he did in shoal-water and blacker sin on the deep,
"But now he's sick of watch and trick and now he'll turn and sleep.
"He'll have no more of the crawling sea that made him suffer so,
"But he'll lie down on the killing-grounds where the hollus-chickie go.
"And west you'll turn and south again beyond the sea-fog's rim,
"And tell the Yoshiwara girls to burn a stick for him.
"And you'll not weight him by the heels and dump him overside,
"But carry him up to the sand-hollows to die as Bering died,
"And make a place for Reuben Paine that knows the fight was fair,
"And leave the two that did the wrong to talk it over there!"
Hail-steam ahead by guess and lead, for the sun is mostly veiled—
Through fog to fog, by luck and log, sail ye as Bering sailed;
And if the light shall lift aright to give your landfall plain,
North and by west, from Zapne Crest, ye raise the Crosses twain.
Fair marks are they to the inner bay, the reckless poacher knows.
What time the scarred sea-catches lead their sleek seraglios;
Ever they hear the floe-pack clear, and the blast of the old bull-whale,
And the deep seal-roar that beats off shore above the loudest gale.
Ever they wait the winter's hate as the thundering *boorga* calls,
Where northwards look they to St. George, and westwards to St. Pauls.
Ever they greet the hunted fleet—lone keels off headlands drear—
When the sealing-schooners flit that way at hazard year by year.
Ever in Yokohama Port men tell the tale anew
Of a hidden sea and a hidden fight
When the Baltic ran from the Northern Light
And the Straisund fought the two.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

THE EARL OF ELGIN.

IN consequence of the death of the Hon. Robert Preston Bruce, the presentation of the freedom of the City of Edinburg to the Earl of Elgin, which was to have taken place on Dec. 9, has been postponed. The following telegram from Mr. Gladstone was received by the Lord Provost in answer to an invitation to the ceremony:—"It is with particular regret that I find myself prevented from being present on the occasion when the freedom of the City of the Edinburg, a gratifying mark of the confidence of his countrymen, will be conferred on the new Viceroy of India."

The Earl of Elgin has selected Lieut. F. Ponsonby, of the Grenadier Guards, and Lieut. F. Adams, of the Scots Guards (the latter now serving with the Egyptian Army) for service as aides-de-camp on his personal staff in India.

METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS.

GOVERNMENT OBSERVATORY.

Bombay, 29th December, 1893.

Means of observations at 6 a.m., 10 a.m., 2 p.m., 4 p.m., and 10 p.m.

Barometer corrected 32 deg. Fah.	29 907
Temperature of the Air	77·7
Wet Bulb Thermometer	70·1
Dew Point	65·5
Relative humidity of Air	0·694
Extent of cloudy sky (the whole sky clouded = 16)	6·0
Maximum temperature of air (read at 8 a.m. next day)	83·4
Minimum do. (read at 8 a.m.)	67·8
General Directions of wind*	N, ENE, E, ESE, WSW, W
Movement of Wind in 24 hours*	163

* From midnight to midnight.

PRESUMABLY, writes the *Pioneer*, the Government of India have not yet made up their minds whether an import duty on silver is to be imposed or not, since we cannot imagine their doing so without immediately publishing their decision. It ought now to be easier to reach a conclusion than it was a few weeks ago. The difficulty was to know what comparative importance was to be attached to speculative imports of silver bullion and to imports made in response to a genuine demand. The price of silver had run up extraordinarily high in Bombay, and if this was to be taken as the effect of a permanent demand, the case for an import duty would have been greatly strengthened. Now within the last week silver bullion in Bombay has fallen almost as rapidly as it rose; on Monday it had dropped from 97 to 87¼. According to the *Bombay Gazette* no orders for silver have been given for some days past, and it is not expected that any will be given. "There is no market for the silver already on its way, and there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, especially among the Bombay and Baroda speculators, who find themselves heavily bit." So far, then, the rise in the value of local silver bullion a few weeks back and the bewildering orders for fresh shipments are not the result of genuine or permanent demand, but purely speculative and artificial. The recent history of the Bombay market thus becomes not so much an argument for the imposition of an import duty, as for a distinct announcement that no duty will be imposed.

NOTICES.

FOR COLDS, COUGHS, HOARSENESS, AND ALL Throat and Lung DISEASES.

As an emergency medicine, a safeguard for children, an ever-ready remedy to be relied upon in cases of colds, coughs, croup, whooping-cough, influenza, and all diseases of the throat and lungs, Ayer's Cherry Pectoral has no equal in pharmacy.

Ayer's Cherry Pectoral

Prepared by Dr. J. C. Ayer & Co., Lowell, Mass., U. S. A.

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TESTIMONIAL FROM
Sir Samuel Baker,
THE FAMOUS NILE EXPLORER.
BLAIR'S
GOUT & RHEUMATIC PILLS.

"NEWTON ABBOT, DEVON,
"DEAR SIRS, "1st October, 1888.
"I have delayed my thanks as I wished to test the effects of Blair's Pills by a sufficient interval of time.
"For ten years I had suffered acutely from Gout, and life had lost its attraction, owing to the uncertainty of health, and the sudden visitations of the enemy, which prostrated me for months or weeks, according to